DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 306 864 HE 022 588

TITLE An Intercultural Seminar for Foreign and U.S. University Students.

INSTITUTION American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C.; Colorado State Univ., Ft. Collins.

PUB DATE Mar 89

NOTE 28p.; This report is one of a group gathered by the AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project, funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. For related documents, see HE 022 565-617, HE 022 619-643 and HE 022 645-659. Some pages of small, broken type may not reproduce well.

PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Adjustment (to Environment); College Students; Cultural Awareness; *Foreign Students; Global Approach; Higher Education; *Intercultural Programs; Models; *Orientation; Program Descriptions; Questionnaires; *Seminars; State Universities; Student Adjustment; Student Development

IDENTIFIERS *AASCU ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project; *Colorado State University Fort Collins

ABSTRACT

Presented is a discussion of an intercultural orientation seminar for foreign and U.S. university students at Colorado State University. This 1-day retreat is held each semester at a lodge in the Rocky Mountains. It is designed to bring together the students and community people to experience an international environment where the goal is to explore each other's cultures and become acquainted. The seminar, known as "A Day in the Mountains," concentrates on feelings attitudes, and the understanding and acceptance of differences in cultures. This is a low-cost-per-person project, almost self-supporting, with a minimal amount of outside funding. Some of the problems facing other types of orientation programs which this program is designed to overcome are information overload, lack of time, perceived lack of relevance, continuing learning experience, and lack of money. This program is replicable in a college or university with foreign students if a supportive office staff exists who believe in the value of the experience. Appended are: a schedule for the all-day seminar; directions for group leaders; additional suggestions from previous evaluation sessions; information on exploring cultural differences; a cultural values worksheet; a questionnaire on cultural assumptions and values affecting interpersonal relationships; a paper on the intercultural adjustment cycle; and common slang used in the United States. (Author/SM)

ED306864

AN INTERCULTURAL SEMINAR

FOR FOREIGN AND U.S. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Contact Person: Jean S. Griswold, Coordinator
International Education and Outreach
Office of International Programs
315 Aylesworth Hall
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado 80523
Phone: (303) 491-5917

March 1989

HF 122 .S82

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

ABSTRACT

As part of an orientation program for incoming foreign students, Colorado State University provides a one day intercultural seminar, a retreat held each semester at a lodge in the Rocky Mountains. The retreat is designed to bring together foreign and U.S. students and community people to experience an international environment where the goal is to explore each other's cultures and to become acquainted. This seminar, known to the students as "A Day in the Mountains," concentrates on feelings, attitudes, and the understanding and acceptance of differences in cultures. The program is designed not only for new foreign students but also for Americans who increasingly must learn to live in the diverse society in their own country.

Explanations of goals, procedures, and materials describe ways that this particular program solves some of the problems of providing effective cross-cultural orientation programs. This is a low cost per person project, almost self-supporting, with a minimal amount of outside funding. It requires the expenditure of time of one staff person as the organizer, plus help from two or three other staff persons and many student and community volunteers. It has proven its value over its ten-year existence as the newcomers use the tools given them to begin their exploration of a new culture. The "veteran" students, foreign and U.S., continue the process as they return in following semesters to serve as seminar resource persons for their new colleagues.

DAY IN THE MOUNTAINS

The concept of providing orientation for a sojourner in a foreign land is not new. People who work with foreign students on a campus, or with U.S. students soon to be foreigners in a study abroad experience, recognize the value of attempting to prepare people for the opportunities and adjustments awaiting them. Some research supports this view but, even if lacking data, most foreign student advisors and organizers of study abroad programs will operate on the assumption that orientation makes sense. It makes sense, at least, to those providing the orientation. The response from recipients in most programs seems to vary from "absolutely necessary," "very worthwhile," to "a waste of my time."

Several problems confront the designers of orientation programs who usually won't accept the "waste of my time" response as valid, and they fault, instead, the particular program or the particular student, not the concept. They recognize the following problems as hurdles to overcome:

1. Lack of time during the busy first week to do more than give a few basic facts.
2. Information overload so that even the basic, essential facts, though told, are not heard.
3. An audience of people of varying intercultural experiences from those who are out of the country for the first time to the well travelled, culturally aware individuals.
4. Lack of immediate relevance of the topic to the incoming student, even though such information may be important in a few days or weeks. However,

finding an opportunity later in the semester to deal with the cultural adjustment questions or problems when they do appear seems impossible.

5. Lack of money to provide facilities, buses, and materials, to make more in-depth orientation sessions possible.

The designer must determine what information is vital, what can be presented in written form, what needs the human touch, and what can wait until later.

Recognizing that not all essential information can be poured into the travel-weary, anxious newcomer, the advisors who plan the sessions should emphasize the goal of helping students learn how to approach a new culture rather than be concerned about the specifics. As in an academic situation where a student may not have learned all the facts but does know where to find them when he needs them, so, too, the newcomer may not understand all he/she first meets but should possess the techniques and resources for finding the answers. To do this the sojourners need a support group to which they can turn when they realize the need for an answer, and they need an attitude of openness to differences.

A special component which attempts to prepare a newcomer for the "learning to learn" approach to a new culture has been added to the traditional orientation sessions at Colorado State University. The traditional orientation includes sessions which present facts on registration and immigration and an introduction to academic survival skills. It also offers receptions, parties, and assistance of student helpers and host families. This additional component at the end of the week-long orientation program is entitled an "Intercultural Communications Seminar," but is better known to old and new students

as the "Day in the Mountains." It addresses at least five of the concerns facing orientation programs:

1. Lack of time. It occurs at the end of the week of the general orientation sessions, taking place on the Sunday before classes begin but after registration is finished. The Sunday date avoids most conflicts with other opening schedules. (An exception: January orientation always seems to fall on Super Bowl Sunday!)
2. Information overload. This seminar does not add more facts but rather deals with attitudes, feelings, and perceptions of cultural differences which can produce misunderstandings.
3. Perceived lack of relevance. The student who "knows all about America" when he arrives finds "veteran" foreign and U.S. students who, by their example, convince him to open up his mind and start asking questions. The Foreign Student Advisor is not telling the newcomer this is important; the returning students persuade him.
4. Continuing learning experience. The students, during this rather intense day in the mountains, where they interact with each other from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., develop a group of acquaintances among the students and staff, whom they recognize later as part of their support group. Even if little contact is made later, they have still been exposed to the techniques of exploring cultures of other people and to the admonition to be as open and non-judgemental as possible.
5. Lack of money. This program can operate on a low budget because of the help from volunteers in buying the food and cooking, because of carpooling, and because everyone pays a fee for the camp, even the leaders. A small subsidy is provided by a local Rotary Club which cushions the

financial loss. The International Office must pay only for the copying of the materials and the staff time.

DESCRIPTION

Every semester new foreign students, returning foreign and U.S. students, and community people spend an entire day at a lodge in the Rocky Mountains on the Sunday before classes begin. The camp is described to the students in their orientation packets as an "intercultural communications seminar: a time to learn about each other's cultures, share ideas about living interculturally, and make new friends." The schedule opens with a general session, then divides the participants into small discussion groups (pre-assigned to insure a cultural and age mix), followed by lunch and free time for hiking (even in the snow in January), games, or relaxation. After tea time they return to their small discussion groups. The closing session is one of sharing songs and dances from all the countries represented. After a light supper and clean up, the students return to the campus about 8:30 p.m.

Although referred to as a "Day in the Mountains," the purpose, which is to develop more intercultural sensitivity among all participants, is strongly emphasized. All organized sessions are devoted to this theme.

PREPARATION

Each semester after an evaluation of the intercultural seminar is made, the materials are rewritten to incorporate the suggestions. During the semester, students and community people are invited to be leaders of the discussion groups. About a month before the event, the potential leaders are called to confirm their acceptance and are asked to come to a planning

meeting. At this meeting, which usually takes place a week before the session, the materials are reviewed, the schedule planned, the skits written and rehearsed, and jobs assigned. During the week before the trip to the mountains, the materials are duplicated so that each participant will have a copy. As soon as the list of sign-ups is final (on Friday evening before the Sunday event), the names are sorted, first by computer, into mixed groups of 7-10 persons with one U.S. leader, and at least two U.S. citizens (preferably a college student and an older community person), then resorted if necessary, by hand, to catch any particular group problems which the computer cannot identify. Name tags are written with the group number on them, facilitating the division into groups upon arrival in camp. Packets are prepared for each leader with exercise sheets for all members, a list of members and a schedule of the work assignments (for serving and cleaning up after meals) for his/her group. The participants arrive early on Sunday, pick up their name tags and are assigned to cars. Drivers are given maps and phone numbers of the camp and sent off when ready. To avoid using drivers who have had little experience in mountain driving, several 15-passenger vans are rented from the university to which reliable drivers are assigned. As there are always some students who sign up and pay but do not attend, additional students can be accepted at the last minute.

PROMOTION

As foreign students check into the Foreign Student Office, they are urged to sign up for the Day in the Mountains, the last orientation session of the week and their last free Sunday before classes begin. The seminar is not required but is highly recommended, an evaluation supported by the "veterans"

who claim it to be the "most useful activity of the year." Of the total number of newcomers, about one-third to one-half attend. Reasons for not attending include not being settled yet, lack of encouragement by certain national groups, and conflicts with other plans. The program is not appropriate for children and, although there is no restriction, they are urged not to take their children. We have not ascertained whether or not the fee of $6.00 for transportation, camp fees, and two meals is a deterrent. We would prefer an up-front orientation fee but this is not approved by the university administration.

FUNDING

The university provides no funding for this part of the orientation and, as mentioned above, does not allow a mandatory orientation fee of all newcomers. Hence, this activity must rely on outside funding and the students themselves. All pay the $6.00 (1989) including the leaders and staff people. A small subsidy from the local Rotary Club provides the cushion for any losses. Costs are kept to a minimum by car-pooling, using volunteers as cooks, and finding an inexpensive camp/lodge to rent.

PARTICIPANTS AND LEADERS

All incoming foreign students are urged to attend. "Veteran" foreign students and U.S. students and community people are invited to attend, at their own expense. The goal for attendance is to have at least one-third U.S. participants, preferably one-half, as this experience is not just for the cultural orientation of the new foreign students but is an intercultural workshop for U.S. students and community people as well. The number of

participants varies, but includes about 150 in the summer and about 80 in the winter semester.

Leaders of the discussion groups are U.S. students, staff, and community people, several of whom are returned Peace Corps volunteers. Leaders are carefully chosen for their group facilitating skills and their intercultural sensitivity.

SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES (see attached schedules and work group lists)

The day begins early with an hour and a half drive to a lodge in the Rocky Mountains. Upon arrival, the students are met by members of their discussion groups whose arrival preceeded the main body of the group. They are served coffee and donuts and spend the waiting time getting acquainted and writing proverbs from their own cultures.

The session opens with a welcome and an explanation of the purpose, an introduction to the topic, and illustrations of cultural differences through humorous skits. This is followed by the small discussion groups. Groups remain together for the morning and afternoon sessions, but students are urged to meet others during the meals and free time. After lunch, the activities are determined by the weather but usually include hiking, volleyball, games, resting and chatting. The closing session includes singing and dancing led by an expert folk dance teacher and spontaneous offerings of songs and dances by national groups in the audience. The day's program ends with a simple supper and clean-up before the drive back to the university.

MATERIALS

To guide the discussion group leaders, we have developed three components:

1. the guidelines for leading the discussion groups
2. the group meeting to discuss the materials and the leaders' responsibilities
3. written materials of critical incidents, topics for discussion, suggestions for approaching an issue with empathy, and an explanation of culture shock.

A sample of the materials is appended.

EVALUATION

Within the week after the Day in the Mountains, the leaders and helpers, and any newcomers who wish to participate, meet for an evaluation session. The general program is critiqued and the materials carefully reviewed for changes. Each semester the sheets are revised to fit changing interests, to eliminate questions which do not produce useful discussion, and to include new topics or approaches. These revised materials are typed for the next semester's seminar.

An evaluation questionnaire is sent to all incoming foreign students on the total orientation program to assess their perception of the usefulness of the programs and to find the percentage of participation.

REPLICABILITY

This program is replicable in a college or university with foreign students if a supportive office staff exists who believe in the value of the experience. Essential is a staff person who organizes the program, enlists the help of volunteers and assists them in their preparation and in running the day's activities. It requires an interested group of student and community volunteers, especially those returning foreign and U.S. students who are convinced, from their own experience, that this is something worthwhile, even worth paying for. A small amount of funding is needed to subsidize what the students pay, funding either from the office or from outside sources. The Day in the Mountains is an energy-consuming activity but it has proven its worth year after year as the newcomers are given some tools to begin their exploration of a new culture.

DAY IN THE MOUNTAINS
AN INTERCULTURAL SEMINAR
SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 1988 - ALL DAY

This is an all-day seminar for new and continuing foreign and U. S. students during which we will learn about each other's cultures, share ideas about living interculturally, and make new friends. We recommend that all new students and scholars attend.

DATE: Sunday, January 24, 1988

TIME: 8:15 a.m. Meet in the International Office, 315 Aylesworth Hall, 3rd floor. We will leave promptly at 8:30 a.m. We will return to Fort Collins about 9:00 p.m.

LOCATION: The camp is in the mountains, about a one and one-half hour drive from fort collins. We will meet in a heated lodge.

COST: $6.00. This includes lunch, supper, coffee, teatime refreshments, camp fees and transportation costs.

TRANSPORTATION: We will travel by private cars. Drivers will be reimbursed for their gasoline expense.

SIGN UP: By 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 22, at 315 Aylesworth Hall

SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m.	Meet at the International Office, 315 Aylesworth Hall. (Go upstairs to get your name tag before leaving.)
8:30 a.m.	Leave for the camp
10:00 a.m.	Arrive at the camp Morning session: Skits and discussion of cultural patterns and living in a new culture.
1:00 p.m.	Lunch and free time
3:30 p.m.	Teatime and continuation of discussion groups
5:00 p.m.	General session, entertainment
6:00 p.m.	Supper
7:00 p.m.	Clean up camp and leave for Fort Collins
9:00 p.m.	Arrive in Fort Collins

SIGN UP AND PAY BY 5:00 P.M., FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 1988

WHAT TO TAKE: Warm clothing, including coats, gloves, hats, and boots

NOTE: If the weather is bad, call the international Office on Sunday Morning, 8:00 a.m., 491-5917 or 591-7894, or 484-5954, for information on change in plans.

MOUNTAIN SEMINAR

DIRECTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS

1. Have everyone introduce him/herself -- telling the group something about themselves which would help the others get to know them. The leader (you) should start out so you can set the pattern.

2. Review the schedule with the group. Inform them of their work group and when to report.

3. Decide on a meeting place for the 3:30 p.m. meeting time.

4. Explain the purpose of the discussion group and begin the Exploring Cultural Differences worksheet or continue discussing the issues brought up by the skits.

   The purpose of the discussion is NOT to get information about another country but rather to talk about customs, behavior, and the values that determine these behavior patterns. Discuss the differences in value systems and the ways those values show themselves in our behavior.

   Example: Politeness. Some cultures show politeness by insisting that a guest eat more. In other cultures, such insistence is considered rude behavior (e.g., in the U. S.). Both cultures stress politeness but the behavior patterns are opposite. Discuss possible reasons (e.g., perhaps an economy of plenty has something to do with it).

   Explore possible historical reasons for cultural patterns. e.g., the value that Americans (most of them) place on independence results partly from our historical background of the settling of a new frontier.

5. The discussions should stress:

   A. openness of mind to new patterns,

   B. willingness to be non-judgemental,

   C. interest in understanding other people,

   D. an awareness that diversity of cultures exists within all countries (that none of us is a "typical" example), and

   E. a willingness to listen to others.

6. There may be a tendency for an individual or two to monopolize the discussion. You, as leader, need to keep gentle control on who speaks out next.

   "Santi, have you had some experience in this?"

   "Let's hear from some of the other cultures so we can see the contrast."

   "Vijay, what about your experience?"

7. You have at least two tools you can use:

   A. a follow-up discussion on the ideas in the skits in the morning, and

   B. the "Exploring Cultural Differences" sheets. Use them as a starter for conversation. They are to be a help and a guide (it is not necessary to go through all the questions).

8. A good way to begin after introductions is to ask the question "What has surprised you during your first few weeks here?". ("surprised," or "found difficult to understand") This question should come after you have talked about having a non-judgemental attitude as a necessity for understanding. (Some students have used this opening question as an invitation to expound on the superiority of their culture, not making any attempt to understand the basis for some patterns in this culture.)

At the end of the ~~section~~ second session, leave time for a re-cap of your discussion.

MANY THANKS FOR BEING A DISCUSSION GROUP LEADER. IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR NEXT "DAY IN THE MOUNTAINS," PLEASE SHARE THEM WITH US.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATION SESSIONS:

1. Begin the morning session with "The Art of Empathy" to help introduce the purpose of the discussions.

2. Use open-ended questions, not closed questions

   eg. What surprises you about CSU? rather than Do you like CSU?

   Don't use yes/no questions to get a discussion started.

3. Perhaps have the multiple choice questions (Part I) in the morning and use Part II and the other sheets in the afternoon.

4. Before leading the discussion, think about the values that the questions bring up.

   eg. Independence, Honesty, Work Ethic, Egalitarianism (can be brought up when discussing men/women's roles as well as discussing classes, races, etc.)

5. Welcome differences in opinions among the Americans in your group. Such differences are a good example of the diversity in our culture.

6. Be sure the students know what they have in their pile of materials. There are some interesting papers but not all have to be used in the seminar. eg. Culture Shock is a good one to read over when one begins to feel stress but, except for pointing it out to the students, you don't need to go over it. Suggest that they read over the sheets at their leisure at home.

EXPLORING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The following situations and questions may be useful to help you explore your own and others' cultures. There are obviously no right or wrong answers. Each individual will have his own opinions, depending not only on the culture he was brought up in, but also on his own personal value system. This exercise is a way to start the exploring process into the variety of ways people have of ordering their lives.

There is not enough time to describe completely all the cultures represented in our groups, so let's try to keep to the issues where most misunderstandings may arise.

The purpose of the discussion is NOT to get information about another country but rather to talk about customs, behavior, and non-verbal communication, and the values that determine these behavior patterns. Discuss the differences in values and the ways those values show themselves in our behavior, and explore possible reasons why a person or group holds a particular value.

PART I:

1. You suggest to a few friends that they join you for lunch at the cafeteria. When the bill comes, what do you expect to do?
   A. Since you had initiated this get-together, you should pay the bill.
   B. If one friend is very wealthy, you would let him pay the bill if he offers.
   C. Everyone should pay for his own (Dutch Treat).

2. You hear of a man thirty years old who is unmarried, has a good job and is still living with his parents. What would your initial reaction be to this situation?
   A. That is a normal situation for an unmarried person.
   B. He is a loving, considerate son.
   C. He is still tied to his family and is not independent.
   D. It's a strange arrangement; something must be wrong with him.

3. You see a man in a wheelchair who is having some difficulty getting up a short ramp. Several American students pass him by without offering to help. Why do you think they do that?
   A. They lack compassion.
   B. They feel that if he is going to be on a college campus, then he should be independent.
   C. "God made him that way and it's not my problem."
   D. They don't want him to feel that they are noticing his handicap; they would offend him by treating him differently.
   E. They realize that he wants to be an independent person, not having to have special treatment.
   F. They are embarrassed to offer help in case he would tell them to mind their own business.

4. You are 75 years old and unable to take care of your big house. In your culture, what would you expect your family to do?
   A. You would move in with your family.
   B. You would live with them even though you would rather have your own apartment.
   C. It would be considered shameful for them to let you live alone.
   D. Other?

5. You made a long distance phone call on your American friend's phone. He seems upset that you did not pay for the call. Why?
   A. He is selfish, not hospitable; he should pay for calls if they are from his house.
   B. He had expected you to offer to pay (even though he had planned to refuse the money.
   C. He thinks you are a "free-loader," trying to take advantage of your friendship.
   D. Other?

6. You reluctantly loan a person an expensive glass bowl, and he accidentally breaks it. What do you expect him to do?
   A. To replace it with a similar bowl.
   B. To say "I'm sorry" and forget it.
   C. To insist on giving you money for its replacement.
   D. He wouldn't mention it and neither would you.
   E. Other

7. You ask a professor to write a letter of recommendation for you. What would you expect him/her to do?
   A. Tell only positive things and not mention anything negative.
   B. Praise you even though he did not mean it.
   C. Give a truthful evaluation of your abilities including good or bad.
   D. Refuse to write the letter if he felt he had to say something bad about you.

8. The president of a large foreign student club on the campus asked the Foreign Student Office for assistance in obtaining grade reports of their members. This club had decided to honor the most outstanding scholar among its members. The Foreign Student Advisor refused this request in the absence of specific, written permission from each student concerned. The club finally dropped the request and also dropped the special achievement award program. They now feel that the University is biased against this nationality and have refused, in turn, to participate in University programs. Group tension resulted.

   A. Why did the Foreign Student Advisor refuse?
   B. How would you solve the problem?

Part II.

A. Saeeda and Dawood are a young Indian couple who have been in the United States for approximately one month. They meet an American couple at a social gathering who seem extremely friendly. They tell Saeeda and Dawood to "drop by anytime" after exchanging addresses and telephone numbers. The next evening at 6:00 p.m., Saeeda and Dawood visit their house but find that their new friends seem surprised and embarrassed. The evening is awkward and filled with much silence.

   Discuss real invitations and polite expressions.

B. Although the word "friend" is present in all languages, the meaning may differ. In English one speaks of acquaintances, friends, "close" friends, and "best" Friends. How does this compare to the concepts in other cultures? How many close friends do you have?

   Every year about 25% of the U. S. population moves. How does that affect friendships?

C. What does it mean to "date" someone (in the U. S.)? How do you ask for a date? Can you have a good friendship (not a romantic relationship) with a person of the opposite sex in your culture?

D. How do you get the attention of a waiter/waitress in your country? In the U. S.? What is the status of a waitress? Tipping-how much?, why?, when?

E. In your country, can you ask a casual acquaintance (not a good friend) questions about the following subjects?
   A. Your salary?
   B. How much your house, car, dress/suit cost?
   C. Politics--governmental differences or criticism of a political figure in another country?
   D. Marital status, babies (e.g., "Why don't you have children?), pregnancy?
   E. Your health--how explicit should you be?

F. Non-verbal communication:
   What gestures are not the same in all countries and hence may be misunderstood?
   1. Men holdings hands
   2. A man and woman hugging each other in public
   3. Shaking the head to signify "yes," "no," and "I agree with you."
   4. Motioning to come here
   5. Standing close to a person when talking to him.
   6. Sitting or standing right next to a stranger when there are plenty of other places in the room to sit or stand.
   7. Shaking hands with everyone when you arrive at a party and when you leave.

G. What are some behavior patterns that are offensive in your culture? e.g., burping, spitting on the street, blowing nose in public, feet on the desk, sitting with legs crossed, hands in pockets when talking to a professor, picking your nose, hands on hips when talking to people, odor from perspiration/perfumes (including after-shave lotion). Talking in theaters, concerts, the library, reaching across the table in front of others for food.

H. What are some of the party customs in your culture?
   A. BYOB (bring your own bottle) - especially for the college crowd
   B. Potluck
   C. "Can I bring something?"
   D. To smoke or not to smoke in people's homes
   E. Arrival customs and leave-taking
   F. "Make yourself at home" - what does that mean?

I. During meal times, observe any behavior patterns which are different from yours. Find out if they are common to the culture or are a pattern of one individual.

J. As society changes, what traditions and values can and should be maintained, in your opinion. In other words, what traditions are important to pass down to your children?

CULTURAL VALUES WORKSHEET

Instructions: Place a check (✓) in front of those values which correspond to your own, and place an "X" in front of those which you least accept. Then go back and rank-order the <u>three</u> values which you hold most strongly, by placing the number 1 beside your pre-eminent value, 2 by the second most strongly held, etc. Rank-order the <u>three</u> which you reject most strongly in a similar way: place 1 beside the value you reject most strongly, etc.

It is valuable to:

_____ Get ahead	_____ Help your fellow man
_____ Be honest	_____ Be tolerant
_____ Respect elders	_____ Respect your environment
_____ Work hard	_____ Win
_____ Be clean	_____ Look out for yourself
_____ Honor one's parents	_____ Obey the law
_____ Be loyal to your country	_____ Honor your word, oath, promises, commitment, etc.
_____ Be free	_____ Know your heritage
_____ Pursue happiness	_____ Save time
_____ Accumulate goods and wealth	_____ Find a better way
_____ Become educated	_____ Adjust to the prevailing social norms
_____ Be religious	_____ Control your emotions
_____ Know the right people	_____ Confront a problem
_____ Always be doing something	_____ Be productive

Hoopes, David S. Editor, Readings in Intercultural Communication Vol. V page 92. Intercultural Communications Network, SEITAR

ISN'T IT INTERESTING HOW OTHERS SEE US?

People of different cultures will perceive and react to Americans in radically different ways depending on the contents of their own cultural baggage. Though many perceptions are shared, the contrasts are always impressive.

The following profiles are both American characteristics and attributes as put forth by Mexicans and Taiwanese:

Mexican Perceptions	Taiwanese Perceptions
Reserved	Friendly/outgoing
Rushed/time conscious	Relaxed/easy going
Realistic/hard-headed	Optimistic
Team worker	Independent
Quality conscious	Output oriented
Unemotional	Emotional
Serious/business-like	Fun-loving/jokier
Self-controlled	Self-indulgent

(Excerpted from "Knowing Your Cultural Baggage" by Gary M. Weaderspahn, The Bridge, Summer 1981)

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CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES AFFECTING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A = Assumption or value held by majority of Americans
C-A = Assumption or value held by majority of persons of a "contrast-American society"; that is, one which is opposed to American society (in contrast to it) in its assumptions and values

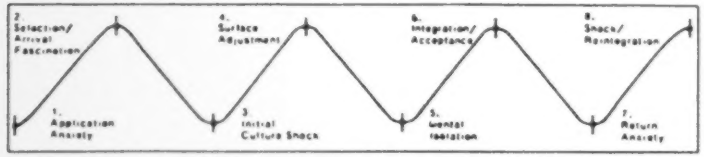
I. *How do we see ourselves?*
1. What is our primary identification?
A Within ourselves as individuals.
C-A As part of a family, clan, caste, or tribe.
2. What do we value in people?
A What people can achieve through special skills.
C-A A person's background, family connections, tribal affiliations.
3. Whom do we rely on for help?
A Ourselves as independently resourceful people.
C-A Our friends, family, and others owing us obligations.
4. How do we learn about life?
A From personal experience.
C-A From the wisdom and knowledge of others.
5. What is the basis of social control in a community?
A From feelings of guilt because we are not living up to our personal standards.
C-A From feelings of shame because we are not living up to the standards of our community.

II. *How do we see our relationships with others?*
1. How do we relate to people of different status or authority?
A Minimize the difference; take for granted everyone's the same.
C-A Stress the difference; show respect for authority/position.
2. How do we relate to new acquaintances?
A Stress informality; make people feel at home.
C-A Stress formality; act properly in front of strangers.
3. How do we idealize work and sex roles?
A Little differentiation between male and female roles.
C-A Distinct and rigid differentiation between male and female roles.
4. How do we idealize sex roles and friendship?
A People may have close friends of both sexes.
C-A People may have close friends of same sex only.
5. How do we idealize sex roles in social relationships?
A Sex equality for males and females.
C-A Male superiority.
6. What are our loyalties to organizational life?
A Move easily from one organization to another when our personal goals are not fulfilled.
C-A Remain with our organization from sense of loyalty even when personal goals are not fulfilled.
7. What are the characteristics of friendship?
A A loose concept applied to many people and based on overlapping special interests; limited obligations to one another.
C-A A specific concept applied to a few people; total involvement based upon mutual love and respect; unlimited obligations to one another.
8. How do we deal with conflict?
A Favor eye-to-eye confrontation between the two people disagreeing.
C-A Find it unacceptable and embarrassing.
9. How do we regard kidding or joking at the expense of others?
A As acceptable, interesting, and fun.
C-A As unacceptable and embarrassing.
10. What are our primary ways of social interaction with friends?
A Doing things together.
C-A Being together.
11. What is the preferred pace of life?
A Fast, busy, conducive to getting things done.
C-A Slow, steady, conducive to getting the most from life.

III. *How do we see the world?*
1. What is nature like?
A Physical; knowable by scientific investigation.
C-A Spiritual and mystical.
2. How do natural forces in the world operate?
A In a rational, controllable manner.
C-A In a predetermined, spiritually controlled manner.
3. What is the role of fate in life?
A It has little influence; we are the masters of our destiny.
C-A It has great influence; there is little we can do to alter it.
4. What is the relationship between man and nature?
A Man should modify nature for his own needs.
C-A Man should accept and integrate with the natural forces around him.
5. What is our attitude toward things we desire in life?
A What is good or desired is unlimited if we work hard.
C-A What is good or desired is limited and must be shared with others.
6. How do we look at time?
A In precise minutes and hours by which we organize our days.
C-A In diffuse days, weeks, or months by which we organize our years.
7. How do we value time?
A As a limited resource not to be wasted.
C-A As an unlimited resource to be used.
8. How does life unfold?
A In a lineal fashion through history.
C-A In a cyclical fashion through recurring seasonal patterns.
9. How do we measure progress?
A In concrete, quantifiable units which indicate amount, size, percent, and the like.
C-A Against abstract social and moral principles of our society.
10. On what basis do we make decisions?
A Will it work?
C-A Is it right?

STEPHEN H. RHINESMITH
BRING HOME THE WORLD
A management guide for community leaders of international programs
AMACOM
A DIVISION OF AMERICAN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS

INTERCULTURAL ADJUSTMENT CYCLE



1. *Application Anxiety.* When waiting for an opportunity to go abroad, people experience anxiety over their chances of selection and their ability to handle their new opportunity. During this time many anticipate cultural differences but have only a superficial awareness of potential adjustment problems.

2. *Selection/Arrival Fascination.* When a person hears that he will be going abroad, he experiences a tremendous amount of elation. This excitement continues (with some small exception just before departure, when anxiety may crop up again) until some time after the individual arrives in his foreign country. During this stage, expectations for the visit are high and the predeparture proceedings, as well as the arrival introductions, are overwhelming and blissful in their newness. Especially on arrival, the visitor tends to be the focus of attention and activity. He (or she) is shown respect and concern which he may seldom receive in his own home community.

3. *Initial Culture Shock.* The initial fascination, along with the rounds of introductions and parties, will soon fade for a visitor who is remaining in a community over a period of time, especially a period as long as six months or a year. Even with visitors coming to the United States on tour, or for Americans going abroad for a similar experience, the novelty of a foreign culture wears off after a few weeks and most people enter a decline known as initial culture shock. Characteristics of this period are possible changes in sleeping habits, disorientation about how to work with and relate to others, and probably language difficulties and mental fatigue from speaking and listening to a foreign language all day.

4. *Surface Adjustment.* After this initial "down," which usually does not last more than a few days to a few weeks, an adjustment takes place and the visitor settles into the situation around him. His language improves, so that he can communicate basic ideas and feelings without fatigue, and he learns how to navigate within a small group of friends and associates.

5. *Mental Isolation.* At some point, however, the novelty wears off completely and the difficulties remain. Frustration increases, and a new and more pervasive sense of isolation can set in. Many times this period is accompanied by boredom and a lack of motivation as the individual feels little stimulus to overcome the deeper and more troublesome difficulties he may be facing. There may be unresolved conflicts with friends, hosts, or peers, or basic language problems which continue to cause difficulty long after initial language adjustment.

6. *Integration/Acceptance.* When the visitor is finally at ease with his professional or school interests, as well as with language, friends, and associates, he is able to examine more carefully the new society in which he is living. Deeper differences between him and others become understandable, and he finds ways of dealing with them. He may complain of the lack of true friendships, but he has come to recognize that this may not be deliberate on the part of the people he is associated with. Eventually, he becomes more integrated into his surroundings and comes to accept both his situation and himself in it. Acceptance of these two realities will allow him to relax and feel at home in his new surroundings.

7. *Return Anxiety.* Once a person is well settled in, the thought of leaving familiar friends, faces, and his new community raises anxieties similar to those the visitor felt during Stage 1, before his departure. He begins to sense how much he has changed because of his experience, and apprehension grows in him at the thought of leaving and returning home to people who will not understand him and his new feelings and awarenesses. He may even feel guilty for wanting to stay and not return home, because he knows that there will be many people waiting for him.

This is a time of great confusion and considerable pain due to the breaking of bonds that have grown close with no promise of renewal in the future. Especially for young people, oceans divide individuals not just by miles but by time, because the expense of transportation means waiting a number of years before they can return.

8. *Shock/Reintegration.* Once the former visitor is back home, the contrast of old and new may come as a shock. He or she probably will have changed a great deal while away, and it will be difficult for family and friends to accept many of the changes. Likewise, having been the center of attention in another country for a period of time, the returnee will be forced after a few days to realize that he has lost his glamour. He then faces the problem of adjusting to being one of the crowd again, while longing for the friends he has left.

He often finds that no one is as interested in the details of his stay abroad as he feels they should be. He experiences conflicts in readjusting to family members and old friends and is frustrated by his inability to describe adequately the depth and nature of his life abroad. All of this makes his surroundings even more depressing.

Final resolution of this stage involves a shift in perspective and an understanding of one's own society and one's future development. The returnee must begin to become involved in new activities at home and to plan a life which is built upon the future rather than the past. Once this is achieved, he or she will be able to integrate usefully the experiences and learnings of the recent past and be productive in his "new" old life.

Rhinesmith, Stephen H., Bring Home the World,
Amacom, A division of Americn Management Associations

COMMON SLANG EXPRESSIONS OR IDIOMS USED IN THE U.S.

Ace an exam: earn a grade of "A"

Air-head: someone who is not very bright or intelligent

A lemon: a bad buy or purchase

All-nighters: persons who are inclined to stay out or be awake all night ("to pull an all-nighter" is to study all night)

Bar-B-Q (barbeque): an outdoor cooking party; also the word for a spicy sauce used with meat

Blowing it Off: not doing something you are supposed to be doing (like not studying, attending a meeting, or going to class)

Big shot: supposedly an important person or someone who thinks s/he is

Boogie: to dance

Booking it: reference to serious studying; "Let's book" is to leave a place.

Break the ice: make a beginning

Buck: a dollar

BYOB: Bring Your Own Bottle (most often heard in party invitations)

Check out: 1) to sign out a book from the library; 2) to try and learn something, "Check it out!": look (at something)

Coming down on me: a form of discipline

Commuter: someone who lives at home and uses some sort of transportation to get to campus or to work

Cram: to study hard just before an exam

Crash: to go to sleep

Cut: to not attend class ("I cut my 8 o'clock class.")

Date: The act of meeting and going out with someone. Also used to indicate the person you are with (usually of the opposite sex)

Dope: illegal drugs

Down to earth: practical, straightforward, simple

Drop: to withdraw from a course ("I dropped my biology class.")

Dutch treat: to pay one's own way.

Far out, groovy, neat, cool: something good or unusual

Feather in your cap: praiseworthy accomplishment

Finals: the last final examinations of the semester

Flick: movie or show (cinema)

Flunk: to fail an examination or a course (grade of "F")

Gay: person who is homosexual

Get over: to finish

Go Dutch: Go out for fun together, each person pays for himself

Give the cold shoulder: to ignore another person

Going steady: going out (dating) one person exclusively

Goof off: lazy or idle person who sometimes does silly things

Gross: something vulgar or crude; to many teenagers (teeny-boppers) this could include just about anything

Hang-up: a problem

Hassle: a nuisance; something that is troublesome;(It's a hassle to register")

Have cold feet: to be nervous, uncertain

He put his foot in his mouth: made an embarrassing blunder

High, stoned: result of taking drugs or smoking grass (marijuana)

Hit the books: study, prepare for classes

Know the ropes: be familiar with the details of something

Let the cat out of the bag: reveal a secret, thus ruining a surprise

Loose: easy to get along with, informal, relaxed. Also describes a person who is sexually promiscuous

Macho: a male who comes on too strong; impressed by his own "maleness"

Make ends meet: budget within one's income

Make-up: (1) to apologize after a fight; (2) complete a class assignment after it was due; (3) cosmetics used by women or actors

Mall: a cluster of stores in one specific area (shopping center)

Mid-Term: an examination given in the middle of the semester to measure progress in the course

Munchies: hunger pangs or what is eaten when hungry (snacks)

Nerd: a fool

Out of it: (1) someone whose mind is far away (preoccupied with something else); (2) someone who doesn't fit in to a certain group

Pain in the neck: someone who is a pest or a nuisance

Phony: (1) something that is fake; (2) someone who is insincere

Piece of cake: something that's easy to do

the pill: common term for the contraceptive birth control pill

Pits: deplorable, an undesirable place

Preppie: someone who dresses like a fashion magazine college student

Psyched: excited about something that is about to happen

Pull one's leg: to chide or tease a person

Pull strings: to use one's influence or prestige to get something done

Pull the wool over someone's eyes: to deceive or mislead someone

Quiz: a short examination usually given without advance warning

Red-neck: someone who is prejudiced or parochial in outlook

Rain cats & dogs: to rain heavily

Rap: to have a talk or discussion

Run around with: spend time together with someone; be friends with

Screw up, screw around: hang around idly without accomplishing anything

Show: film or cinema (see "flick")

Skip: not go to class; also, to "skip out" (see "cut")

Son of a gun: a person not liked

Space cadet: someone who appears to be in another world; unaware

Spill the beans: to reveal a secret (see "let the cat out of the bag")

Split hairs: to make unnecessarily fine or petty distinctions

Stag: to "to stag" is to go to a dance or party without a date. The term usually applies to men.

Straight: someone who is ultra-conservative; not homosexual (see "gay")

Stoned: to get high on marijuana

Stuffed shirt: a pompous, inflexible person

T.A.: Teaching assistant

Take for granted: to assume

Take it easy: relax, rest, not to worry

Turkey: a fool (see "nerd")

Under the weather: sick, not feeling well

Vegetating: "I'm vegetating" means "I'm thinking" or doing nothing in particular

Wheels: an automobile

Common expressions of greeting or saying goodbye:

HELLO: "What's up?" "What's happening?"
"How's it going?" "How are you?"
"What's the scoop?"

GOODBYE:

"See you later" "So long"
"See you around" "Take it easy"

See Dictionary of American Idioms on hand in the Office of Developmental Education for further reference.